

thank each of my colleagues for joining me to discuss this issue.

Today, a series of Members will come to the floor to tell you the truth about the barriers, both past and present, that have prevented Americans from voting.

The Voting Rights Act is one of the most important laws enacted by our government in the history of our democracy, because it allows the people to address past and present disenfranchisement as well as disparate conditions that will affect the ability to exercise voting rights in the future.

Passage of H.R. 9 to reauthorize and renew the 1965 Voting Rights Act is critical to our democracy and our democratic form of government and the free exercise of the voting rights of all Americans.

Mr. Speaker, the stories that you and America will hear today will underscore why the Voting Rights Act is so important and must be renewed. You will hear stories from Members of Congress who were voting age prior to the Voting Rights Act of 1965 that recount some of the extreme difficulties and egregious legal impediments that constrained their right to vote, and you will hear other stories about real people denied the right to vote.

NORTH KOREA'S MISSILE TESTS

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, last week shortly after the July 4 fireworks dwindled from the sky, the North Korean Government put the entire world on the edge of its seat when it hosted a much scarier fireworks show of its own.

I rise today in strong opposition to the test firing of missiles by the North Korean Government. This test firing amounts to little more than an attempted show of force by the North Koreans, and it must not be tolerated.

I support President Bush's proposal for multilateral discussions aimed at maintaining peace and stability in the region and urge the international community to stand alongside America in denouncing this threatening act.

These tests represent a grave threat to the entire global community, and North Korea must act responsibly and adhere to a moratorium on missile testing if peace is to be maintained. I trust that diplomatic discussions coupled with the international outrage following the missile tests will be enough to convince the North Korean Government to abandon its dangerous path.

RENEW VOTING RIGHTS ACT

(Mr. DAVIS of Illinois asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, as one who grew up in the rural South

where my parents and their neighbors and friends had to pay a poll tax to vote, and as one who lives in an urban inner city community where polling places are oftentimes moved without proper notification and where unsuspecting voters are intimidated, especially those with language and education barriers, the Voting Rights Act is one of the best safeguards of our democracy that we have seen.

Mr. Speaker, I urge its renewal, I urge its passage.

GUN CONTROL DOESN'T WORK

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I find it extremely ironic that on the same day Washington Police Chief Charles Ramsey declared a crime emergency, The Washington Post has published another misguided editorial promoting the failed efforts of gun control.

The editorial attacked Members of Congress for failing to further restrict Americans' second amendment rights. The Post specifically criticized my statement that "responsible and law-abiding citizens do not need the government to tell them to be safe."

Perhaps they forgot, while the District of Columbia has some of the most restrictive gun laws in our country, it also has one of the highest murder rates in the Nation. Thirteen people have been killed in Washington in only the past 12 days.

Instead of petitioning Congress to place additional restrictions upon law-abiding citizens, perhaps The Post should push for tougher laws to help keep criminals off the streets of America.

In conclusion, God bless our troops and we will never forget September 11.

RENEW VOTING RIGHTS ACT

(Mr. WATT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WATT. Mr. Speaker, the rules of the House won't allow me to do what George H. White did in 1901 when he rose to address an agriculture bill for 5 minutes and ended up speaking for an hour and a half, giving his farewell to Congress and saying these words: "Mr. Speaker, this perhaps may be the temporary farewell of minorities and African Americans from this body, but some day we will rise up and come again."

Well, it took 92 years from that point in 1901 until 1993 when Eva Clayton and I returned to Congress as African American Members from North Carolina.

And thank God the laws won't allow the exclusion of African Americans and other minorities from this democracy any longer because of the Voting Rights Act.

We have got to renew it and extend it. We need to do it today in the House.

KEVIN ESTEP, VOLUNTEER HERO

(Mrs. CAPITO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an outstanding West Virginian, Kevin Estep, from Apple Grove, West Virginia. A volunteer with the National Service Agency, Kevin is the recipient of the 2006 Learn and Serve America Spirit of Service Award.

Kevin received his honor at the 2006 National Conference on Community Volunteering and National Service, which was held in Seattle, Washington, because of his service with HI-Y, a YMCA-affiliated leadership organization.

He has volunteered as a camp counselor, helped 7-to-12-year-old, low-income, at-risk boys and girls at the Governor's Youth Opportunity Camps at the YMCA Camp Horseshoe. He encourages children to read, try new things, build skills, and set goals for a better life.

A leader in his school, Kevin is an honor student with a 3.9 GPA, a member of the school band, and has two part-time jobs. As a graduate of Point Pleasant High School, he plans to attend Marshall University in Huntington in the fall. Kevin is a leader in his community at a young age, and he is a role model for his peers and younger West Virginians.

I commend him on his service to his community, State, Nation, and fellow citizens.

PASS VOTING RIGHTS ACT

(Mr. WYNN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WYNN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to call on my Republican colleagues to bring up and pass the renewal of the Voting Rights Act.

On March 7, 1965, our colleague, JOHN LEWIS, and 500 civil rights activists marched from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama. They paved the way for the Voting Rights Act.

My grandmother, Bella Russell, lives in Warren County, North Carolina. She is 98 years old. She knows all about the need for the Voting Rights Act. She experienced literacy tests and intimidation and other barriers to voting.

We needed the Voting Rights Act then and we need it today. We need it today because in my State of Maryland, people are still being told you have to pay all of your late fees on your rent in order to vote; you have to pay your parking tickets to vote.

Don't forget to vote on Wednesday. People are still being intimidated. We need the Voting Rights Act as an effective check on those who would deter other Americans from exercising their important right to vote.